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ABSTRACT

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education (ICOVE) has tried to influence educational policy in recent years. Members of the council met with the chief executive officers of the three educational boards in Illinois to discuss issues and pending policies paramount within the educational arena. ICOVE also met with members of the various education committees of the Illinois General Assembly. The purpose of these meetings was to (1) inform policymakers of findings of the council resulting from studies and other council activities; (2) acquire feedback from the leaders regarding council findings and policy directions; and (3) determine ways in which ICOVE could be of service to leadership in resolving educational issues and forming new policy to target quality and excellence in education. Following the meetings with educational leaders, ICOVE compiled a list of 11 issues for which the council and policymakers share common interests and views: (1) the need for schools to prepare people for continuing education and work; (2) the value of private sector internships for all teachers; (3) the need to provide academic instruction in an applied format; (4) the need to integrate academic and vocational education; (5) the desire to eliminate the tracking system; (6) the need to teach students about work; (7) the need to expand student options; (8) the need to improve the image and quality of vocational education; (9) concern for public perception of graduation and university entrance requirements; (10) increased private-sector participation; and (11) the need to train teachers for teaching basic skills in vocational education. (KC)

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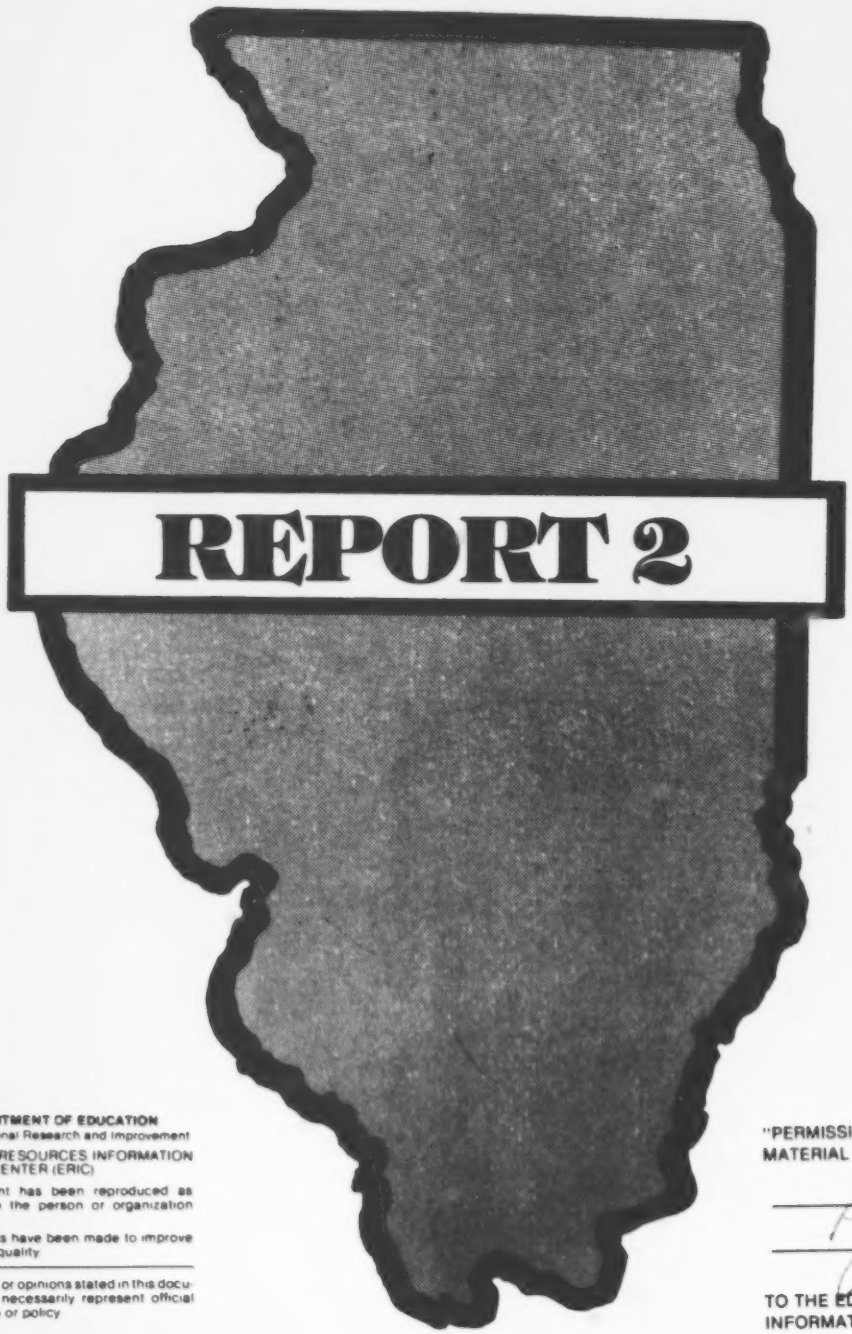
Dialogue with Educational Leaders: Implications for Policy



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ILLINOIS COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
1987-1988

This report is one in a series of 25 technical reports prepared to fulfill mandates of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, 1984.

CE 054 665

TECHNICAL REPORTS
1987-1988

Technical reports of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education in this series designed to fulfill the requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, 1984 include:

Report 1 ICoVE's REVIEW OF THE STATE PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ILLINOIS FY 89-90

Report 2 DIALOGUE WITH EDUCATIONAL LEADERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

Report 3 ADVICE TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Report 4 DISTRIBUTION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FUNDS

Report 5 ACCESS OF TARGETED POPULATIONS TO QUALITY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 6 EVALUATING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ILLINOIS

Report 7 PRIVATE-SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 8 IMPROVING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY

Report 9 ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS AND APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Report 10 REDUCING THE LIMITING EFFECTS OF SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING

Report 11 PREPARING AND MAINTAINING WORKERS

Report 12 SERVING ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AREAS

Report 13 SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Report 14 CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING EDUCATION

Report 15 JTPA 8% FUNDS

Report 16 ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF JTPA

Report 17 PERCEPTIONS WHICH AFFECT COORDINATION BETWEEN JTPA AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 18 TECHNICAL COMMITTEES AND ILLINOIS CURRICULUM

Report 19 EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT: WHAT'S WORKING? WHAT'S NOT?
(Public Hearings Report)

Report 20 PROGRESS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT POLICY
(A Survey Report)

Report 21 REGIONAL DELIVERY SYSTEMS: OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS (A Survey Report)

Report 22 EFFECTS OF THE ICoVE 1986-87 STUDY OF THE COORDINATION OF JTPA AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 23 PERCEPTIONS RE: ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE JTPA AND V.E. PERKINS ACT PROGRAMS IN ILLINOIS

Report 24 THE IMPACT OF STATE POLICY AND PRACTICES FOR EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Report 25 CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION: A WAY TO STAY OUT (sub series)
- Monitoring and Evaluating the Services for Correctional Inmates (25A)
- Recommendations for Illinois with Supporting Statements (25B)
- Recommendations for Illinois and a Report of the Anderson Study (25C)

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DATE: March 8, 1989

TO: Governor James R. Thompson
Illinois State Board of Education
The Business Community
The General Public

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education is pleased to present this report dealing with legislative concerns, implications for policy, and actions taken to influence policy.

In the spring of 1988, a productive first-time meeting was initiated by ICoVE with the executive director of the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois State Board of Education's Superintendent of Schools, and the executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The meeting produced a framework of understanding dealing with the needs for a statewide plan for preparing our people for the world of work. This message seems to be gaining popularity, especially from the major employers of our state.

Another beginning started with a legislative breakfast in which members of the Illinois General Assembly who serve on the Appropriations, Elementary, and Secondary Education Committees in their respective chambers were invited. This forum allowed ICoVE to express its concerns and to react to questions from the legislators regarding adequate preparation of our people for employment and upgrading. The ladder for preparing employees and youth to successfully prepare for work may be long, but at least, the first step was taken.

Sincerely,

Gordon Ropp

Investing in People

An Equal Opportunity Employer

DIALOGUE WITH EDUCATIONAL LEADERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Gordon Ropp
Gerald Schmidt
Mary Beth Stine

Illinois Council on Vocational Education
100 Alzina Building
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62702

1987-1988

"Many employers say that the most important skills for any employee are the academic triumvirate - reading, writing, and computation. With increasing regularity, employers are telling the media, 'Give me people who can read, write, and do simple math and I'll train them for the jobs I have available! But probing further, one finds that employers want good basic academic skills AND MUCH MORE!"

Source: WORKPLACE BASICS: The Skills Employers Want.
American Society for Training and Development and
The United States Department of Labor.

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PREFACE

Provisions of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 set forth numerous requirements of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education (ICOVE). This report partially fulfills one of those requirements. Report 24 addresses it specifically. The requirement is to advise concerning:

> ***policies the State should pursue to strengthen vocational education. [Section 112 (d) (2) (A)]***

Further, the Act requires the Illinois Council to "advise the State board and make reports to the Governor, the business community, and general public of the State" concerning these policies.

In directing state councils to advise concerning needed policies to strengthen vocational education, the Perkins Act also inserts, using parentheses: "with particular attention to programs for the handicapped." As ICoVE evaluates and analyzes vocational education programs, services, and activities in Illinois, it uses a process which encompasses the handicapped and several additional "at risk" populations in its evaluation and analysis. When ICoVE considers policy issues, it considers all segments of the population; therefore, the policy issues addressed in this report incorporate handicapped, as well as all other segments of the population.

"Particular attention to the handicapped" is reported in ICoVE's Technical Report 5, Access of Targeted Populations to Quality Vocational Education. Other reports in the ICoVE series of reports identify handicapped-related concerns as well.

This report describes some of ICoVE's efforts to influence educational policy in recent years. Examples of ICoVE's suggestions and input are included. Additional ICoVE efforts are made through studies and recommendations presented to the State Board, the Governor, the Illinois General Assembly, and other Illinois decision-makers in the form of reports. Reports address specific issues. Accompanying implications for policy range from goal-setting policy to administrative policy.

ACRONYMS

IBHE = Illinois Board of Higher Education
ICCB = Illinois Community College Board
ICoVE = Illinois Council on Vocational Education
ISBE = Illinois State Board of Education
VIP = Vocational Instruction Practicum

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DIALOGUE WITH EDUCATIONAL LEADERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

This report describes some of ICoVE's efforts to influence educational policy in recent years. Examples of ICoVE's suggestions and input are included. Additional ICoVE efforts are made through studies and recommendations presented to the State Board, the Governor, the Illinois General Assembly, and other Illinois decision-makers in the form of reports. Reports address specific issues. Accompanying implications for policy range from goal-setting policy to administrative policy.

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Members of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education met with the chief executive officers of the three educational boards in Illinois to discuss issues and pending policies paramount within the educational arena. ICoVE also met with members of the various education committees of the Illinois General Assembly. The purpose of these meetings was three-fold:

- TO INFORM – report findings of ICoVE resulting from studies, public and other information-gathering activities of the Council, concerning vocational education and education in general.

- TO BE INFORMED – engage in dialogue with leaders to acquire feedback regarding the Council findings and policy directions under consideration.

- TO SEEK SOLUTIONS - determine ways in which ICoVE could be of service to leadership in resolving educational issues and forming new policy to target quality and excellence in education.

Following the meeting with educational leaders, ICoVE compiled a list of eleven issues for which the four groups (ICoVE, ISBE, IBHE, and ICCB) share common interests and views. These issues became topics of subsequent discussions between ICoVE and representatives of these boards in follow-up meetings. Similar issues were discussed with members of the General Assembly serving on various education committees.

The eleven common interests and views are found within the text of Report 2.

The actions described in the report include dialogue with educational leaders and decision-makers. Included are transcripts of testimony presented at public hearings regarding policy issues and correspondence from council members addressing policy matters.

INTRODUCTION

Educational policy, like other human resource development policy, need not target vocational education ***directly*** to affect it. This becomes increasingly true as vocational education becomes more and more integrated into the total educational process. As the goal to "expand student options" rather than guide students down a single, narrow educational path or track becomes more and more sought after, the interrelationship of policies to each other becomes apparent.

Educational reform of recent years has generally focused on quality and excellence in education. As part of the educational arena, vocational education benefits. However, some aspects of reform and accompanying policies are thought to affect vocational education adversely. These consequences concern ICoVE. As part of its responsibility for "advising on policies to strengthen vocational education," ICoVE has reviewed policy, analyzed proposed policy, and suggested new policy. This report highlights ICoVE's analysis of proposed policy and provides an overview of actions taken to influence the policy.

The actions described in the following pages include dialogue with educational leaders and decision-makers. Included are transcripts of testimony presented at public hearings regarding policy issues and correspondence from council members addressing policy matters.

DIALOGUE WITH EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

Members of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education met with the chief executive officers of the three educational boards in Illinois to discuss issues and pending policies paramount within the educational arena. ICoVE also met with members of the various education committees of the Illinois General Assembly. The purpose of these meetings was three-fold:

- TO INFORM – report findings of ICoVE resulting from studies, public and other information-gathering activities of the Council, concerning vocational education and education in general.
- TO BE INFORMED – engage in dialogue with leaders to acquire feedback regarding the Council findings and policy directions under consideration.
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A brief overview of ICoVE's rationale for the issue is provided for each. The reasons each group of leaders have for their interest in these issues vary. The approach by different groups toward resolving the issues would also be varied, as would the priorities given. The eleven common interests and views follow.

ISSUE I	The necessity of our schools, helping people prepare for both continuing their education and going to work.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Many students choose to continue their education; nearly all students, at some point in time, will go to work. Productive work is essential to today's society and today's economy. Students entering the work place with the skills employers want will have an advantage for success and advancement. Students entering the work place without these skills do so at a disadvantage. Students unprepared for work ultimately cost the employer, which, in turn, has a negative impact on the nation's economy.

ISSUE II	The potential value of the VIP (internship) program for all teachers, not just vocational educators.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Few classroom teachers have work experience in the private sector to enhance their knowledge of how work is performed in today's work place and the skills necessary to perform that work, including academic, interpersonal, and occupational. The VIP experience provides opportunities for teachers to incorporate "real work" applications to curriculum content. As work itself changes, up-to-date work experience brings new work needs to the attention of the teacher.

ISSUE III	The need to provide academic instruction in an applied format.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Academic instruction needs to accommodate a wider variety of individual learning styles. Many students learn better if they can relate what they are learning to where and how it will be used. Employers want employees who can apply knowledge to decision making and problem solving. Experience in doing this should be included in academic instruction.

ISSUE IV	The need to integrate "academics" and "vocational" education (i.e., strengthen academics in vocational education and provide application to academics).

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Today's jobs require academic skills beyond the basic three R's. Workers need to know how to apply the three R's to problem solving, decision making, and interpersonal relationships. Vocational education students need a strong background in basic three R academics, but they must also know how to apply these academics in the work situation.

ISSUE V	The desire to eliminate the two-track/three-track educational system that is emerging.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
The tracking system limits students to an "either/or" course which ultimately limits their options. Students should possess the option to enter employment or continue their education at any given point in their lifetime. To do this, they must receive preparation for both. It is feared that a third track (general education) that prepares students for neither is further limiting students' futures.

ISSUE VI	The need to teach students about work.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Employers need employees who understand concepts basic to productivity, competitiveness, and profit. Technological advancements are causing changes in the way work is being done in today's work place. Students need to understand about work so they can perform the functions necessitated by these changes.

ISSUE VII	The need to expand student options, not narrow them.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Technological advancements are changing job descriptions daily. Students need educational programs which will prepare them to select a wide array of options. They should be prepared to select these options at the moment an opportunity presents itself. Options are not readily available to students if they must receive remedial education or "go backwards" in any way to acquire basic skills needed in the work place.

ISSUE VIII	The need to improve the image, as well as the quality, of vocational education.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Like work in today's jobs, vocational education requires more than a strong body and the ability to work with one's hands. Vocational education suffers from an image problem. The image that vocational education is for those who are "less academically talented" must be changed. The need for quality vocational education programs must be brought to the attention of the public as well.

ISSUE IX	The concern for the public's perception of graduation and proposed university entrance requirements and how this perception is influencing educational choices.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
Increased emphasis on additional academic courses for graduation and university entrance is too often being perceived by the public as the "ultimate" answer in the quest for quality. The perception that vocational education and other programs not listed as a requirement have nothing to contribute to those ends is increasing. Parents and counselors are encouraging students to meet the requirements so as to not jeopardize the option. Vocational education options are being lost by many because of this

perception. The use of courses or time spent in courses is an inappropriate method of measuring achievement necessary to meet requirements.

ISSUE X	The need to increase private-sector participation in the total educational process and, more specifically, to promote partnerships among education, business, labor, and government.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
All educators, not just vocational educators, need to expand their knowledge of how work is performed in the work place if they are to include new concepts into education. Educators need to understand why listening and oral communication are important and how these are used in the work place.

Educators need to understand the necessity for self-esteem, goal setting, motivation, and teamwork in the work place and how all workers are affected. Educators need to understand how all levels of occupations depend on creative thinking and problem solving by the workers. Educators need to comprehend technology and its impact on what students need to know. Partnerships at the local level can promote an ongoing apprisal of work place needs with the educational community.

ISSUE XI	The need to train and retrain teachers who will be capable of teaching basic skills in vocational education courses.

ICoVE RATIONALE:
The need for basic academic skills in vocational education courses in recent years has skyrocketed. Many vocational educators lack the skills necessary to integrate these components into existing curriculum. Teacher preparation programs need to place new emphasis on preparing teachers to teach academic skills in vocational education.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

The issues have far-reaching implications for policies. The policies chosen will affect vocational programs throughout Illinois. If education does not accept responsibility for preparing and maintaining the workforce, the State of Illinois will have to designate the responsibility elsewhere. If preparation for work follows secondary education, significant social changes are in order and the state must be ready to deal with those consequences.

The decline in the number of young people available for work and the increasing need for workers in the work place make it imperative that all segments of the population have adequate preparation for work, particularly those who have historically been underserved by the system. Opportunities for at-risk populations, including the handicapped, will be greatly expanded if the populations are prepared to take advantage of them.

Decline in the number of new workers entering the work place is already presenting hardships in business and industry. If business and industry have to wait for this already-shrinking pool to go through additional work preparation before they are work-ready, the hardships will increase.

Maintaining the current workforce is putting stress on private-sector training budgets. With rapid changes occurring, the private sector is hard-pressed to provide the needed updating and upgrading for current workers. In small businesses where training programs are nonexistent, the workers have to be replaced.

Without an adequate and appropriate system for preparing and maintaining our State's workforce, Illinois' ability to compete in a world market will adversely affect the State's economy.

COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING SPECIFIC ISSUES

Members of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education communicate council positions, as well as their personal views, to decision-makers as various issues surface. This section contains a presentation of several positions and views which have been communicated by ICoVE members. The issue and targeted audience for the various communications are identified. The ICoVE members responsible for the communication, along with how the view (format) was presented are listed. Communications are verbatim.

ISSUE: Vocational Education and Higher Education Admission Requirements
Public Act 85-1322

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: The General Public

ICoVE Member: Gerald Schmidt, ICoVE Chair 1988-89
Manager, Training & Public Affairs
Caterpillar, Inc.

Format: Letter to the editor of the Chicago Tribune (ICoVE Position).
Letter Copies: ISBE, ICCB, IBHE, General Assembly

"It is refreshing to learn that the staff of the Illinois Board of Higher Education is reconsidering the implementation of the 1993 Illinois university entrance requirements. Perhaps this new recommendation--to make the '93 requirements advisory--is recognition by this staff that these requirements may have broad impact on the total Illinois educational system and that they will affect much more than the performance of the university system. They are to be commended for their concern.

"The questions being raised by this new proposal may lead to greater support and 'agreed upon' purpose to guide state and local education administrators and teachers. While many, including Governor Thompson, wish to increase taxes, it's the local administrators and teachers who are in the trenches trying to improve Illinois' educational processes--processes that suffer from lack of parental interest, lack of financial support and lack of involvement by the public including employers.

"As Illinois employers search for talent to meet labor market needs, the importance of competence will continue to increase. And as the labor market talent shrinks, the source of competence (the

prescribed course(s), the school, and the degree) will diminish in importance as the workforce continues to age through the 1990's. Class rank, SAT and/or ACT scores and course completions may predict university success, but are of less value in predicting the on-the-job competence of employees--whatever their educational background.

"As chair of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education (ICoVE), a council of thirteen members representing labor, business, and education, I encourage the members of IBHE to fully analyze the consequences of the '93 standards before finalizing their vote on this issue. The questions which follow should be answered with all of the research and relevant data that's available. And their concern must extend to the entire process of public education in Illinois--not just the university system.

1. *How will the proposed 1993 requirements affect the social and technical problem-solving competence of the total Illinois workforce by 2015? (U.S. Department of Labor projections describe the vast majority of job openings occurring between now and beyond the year 2000 as requiring education or training beyond the secondary level, but not a four-year undergraduate degree.)*

2. *Will the 1993 requirements be perceived by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and their local school boards as permission to reduce curriculum variety? And, if so, how will this narrowing prepare the majority of students who never go on to or complete college for the worldly changes being thrust upon Illinois employees and employers by global competition, technical innovation, and social unrest?*

3. *Will these requirements be adding quantity, quality, or both? In Illinois schools during the past 30 years many of the tax dollars have paid for additional remedial education. To what degree will these requirements allow simply 'more' and not require 'better'? Will these requirements cause already frustrated students to endure 'more of the same' from well-meaning teachers who have limited time and experience to guide critical, lifelong student decision-making and career path commitments?*

4. *Will these requirements cause costs to increase in other educational service areas? Will they require new services to be supported by additional taxes? What positions are being taken by Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), local school boards and community college boards? And even more importantly, what data or research or other evidence (Please eliminate your personal opinions) are these decisions based upon?*

And, finally, why is the decision seemingly being made unilaterally by IBHE without the positions of others being taken into consideration?

5. *Will the requirements reduce the drop-out rate among Illinois students--a rate reported to be between 25 and 30 percent (as a statewide average--but in some localities exceeding 60 percent using entering high school freshman as a base)? Or will these requirements increase the drop-out rate and ultimately increase Illinois tax expenditures via alternative schools, social programs, and even prison costs?*

"The Tribune's January 13 editorial entitled 'Backing Down on Academic Standard' does not attempt to answer the above questions. It also fails to clarify the difference between quality education and quantity education as measured by 'course completions.' But that same confusion seems to exist among many who influence educational policy as well as many others who influence the career choices of students of all ages and who believe in the traditional benefits of education.

"Again, we commend Dr. Wagner, the IBHE staff, and the Tribune editorial writer for their determined devotion to improving the quality of educational processes in Illinois. Regardless of the outcome of the vote on this issue--now scheduled for the March 7 IBHE meeting, ICoVE will continue to encourage improvement in both academic and vocational educational processes used to prepare and maintain the Illinois workforce."

ISSUE: Vocational Education and Higher Education Admission Requirements, Public Act 85-1322

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Committee on Vocational Education and Higher Education Admission Requirements

ICoVE Member: Representative Gordon Ropp, ICoVE Chair 1986-88
State Representative, 88th District
Dairy Farmer

Format: Oral testimony of ICoVE views presented to committee.

"ICoVE applauds the Illinois legislature for the passage of Public Act 85-1322. In a time when educational reform at the secondary level has basically addressed the college prep and has been defined as everything from a quantity of academic courses, a more is better belief, to learning outcomes, we feel that it's time that our state addresses the purpose of a high school education and what all students are to achieve.

"The National Commission on Excellence in Education in its report 'A NATION AT RISK' stated that more and more people emerge from high school ready neither for college nor for work. This predicament becomes more acute as the knowledge base continues its rapid expansion, the number of traditional jobs shrink, and new jobs demand greater sophistication and preparation.

"The National Commission on Secondary Vocational Education stated that secondary school students are a diverse group, varying in background, ability, and aspirations. A wide variety of educational approaches are needed to accommodate those differences; no single prescription can be effective for everyone.

"There have been many reports with similar findings and each has recognized that secondary education is a complex process if it is to improve education and educational opportunities for all students.

"Your committee has requested comments and suggestions on:

- *What types of vocational courses provide appropriate academic preparation for baccalaureate-oriented work?*
- *What guidelines should be used in identifying such courses?*
- *Within the context of the minimum course admission standards of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, how can secondary schools provide elective options for students such as vocational education courses?*

"ICoVE does not feel qualified to present a list of vocational courses which provide academic preparation for a baccalaureate degree. However, we feel that some courses now being labeled as vocational meet college admission standards. In addition, they bridge the gap between the so-called academic and vocational courses. They are valuable for all students:

- *in career decision-making,*
- *in understanding the reality of the work place,*
- *in motivating them to learn and apply basic skills,*
- *for opportunities to acquire necessary work habits and job skills,*
- *in relating theory and practice.*

"In our review of secondary education, we have found that all secondary students need a balance of both academic and vocational experiences to prepare themselves for life in a changing world.

"ICoVE feels that the real issue is QUALITY! Lack of quality has been the dominant theme in all reports examining academic education over the past several years. Quality is also a major issue in vocational education.

"If vocational education courses are going to be acceptable for college entrance requirements and ICoVE feels they can and should be if they address the competencies attained through "academic" courses.

"Although the college admission people will ultimately make the final determination in accepting vocational courses as meeting entrance requirements, many groups, public and private, in and out of education, must cooperate to achieve the quality and direction needed to put vocational education where it needs to be.

"ICoVE recommends that the Committee on Vocational and Higher Education Admission requirements make the following recommendations to the legislature.

- *The Illinois boards for elementary/secondary, and higher education should not mandate curricular requirements that restrict students' opportunities to participate in vocational experiences.*
- *All students should be able to choose a comprehensive set of course offerings across academics and vocational areas.*
- *Students should be allowed to satisfy some requirements for high school graduation and college admission standards through vocational courses if they are comparable in quality, content coverage and rigor, and ensure competency development.*
- *The boards of elementary and secondary education, higher education and state universities should facilitate and work together in the development of vocational curriculum which addresses student needs for the world of work as well as admission to universities.*
- *The Governor, legislature, educational leaders and general public must demand and support educational policy which is not limited to the higher orders of talent and change the perception that anything less than a college prep/ baccalaureate degree program is second-rate. The purpose of schooling is to provide a universal quality education for all people in Illinois.*
- *Secondary schools should make it possible for all students, including the college bound, to take vocational courses in addition to college prep courses by lengthening the school day, using innovative scheduling procedures, eliminating mandated courses such as physical education at the 11th and 12th grade level (as they now can legally do for students who need a college entrance course) and encourage students to enroll in courses which could assist them with their career plans.*

"In answer to the question what guidelines should be used in identifying vocational education which meet college admission, ICoVE recommends college admission personnel must meet with high school principals, counselors, and teaching staff to identify how vocational courses can meet academic standards acceptable for admission of students pursuing a baccalaureate degree. Experts who

are scientifically competent to judge courses should be used to evaluate quality and content of any course which is to be used for college admissions. The business world is concerned with what competencies people have and not where they got them. It is ICoVE's recommendation that those responsible for making decisions on college admission look at student competencies, rather than go by course title.

"In answer to the question on the Board of Higher Education requirements, ICoVE has recommended that these be advisory rather than mandated.

"ICoVE supports the concept that students must be prepared to enter and succeed in higher education; however, in our opinion the IBHE is basing its recommendation on the quantity of courses taken and not necessarily quality and content or the competence, talents, and many other kinds of excellence of individuals seeking admission to colleges offering a baccalaureate degree."

ICoVE Member: James Denny
Director, Organization/Human Resource Development
International Minerals & Chemical Corporation

Format: Letter to committee chair.

"This is my written response to the NOTICE OF HEARINGS on Public Act 85-1322 - Higher Education Admission Requirements. I am writing both as a member of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education and in my professional capacity with IMC [International Minerals and Chemical Corporation].

"As one who did not find himself until after he graduated from a college-prep Jesuit high school, I strongly feel that the State of Illinois should provide to <u>all</u> high school students a 2-path educational system - vocational and academic - not one or the other. Academic basics and vocational orientation should be learned on an integrated basis - all students learning the same basics taught with a view/application towards the adult life and the work of work. That is true Education for Employment. I continue to feel, after 40 years, that I was short-changed in high school from both career education and basic vocational education standpoints. Fortunately, a hitch in the U.S. Navy following high school filled these gaps.

"In more recent years, I've had the opportunity (and pleasure) to work with high schools in Lake and DuPage counties in the area of career education/guidance. Speaking to classes, the students who have most impressed me are those involved in some type of cooperative or distributive education. Their interest, maturity and behavior continue to impress me. Recently, however, I became

familiar with two cases at Naperville Central High School where exemplary students, applying for early admissions (engineering) at the University of Illinois were encouraged to drop their co-op experiences (one at Bell Laboratories in computer operations) and take 'more rigorously demanding' academic courses; that the computer experience could be gained by a course in college. Nuts! These kinds of work/study experiences are invaluable and should be encouraged for all students. I'm also speaking from 19 years of corporate experience with college-level co-op/intern programs.

"I have no problems with demanding academic excellence. . .but not at the expense of short-changing vocational and career orientation. The 1993 Higher Education Entrance Requirements may not need to be amended or modified <u>if</u> we look at a school day of 360 minutes versus the current 300 minutes. This would provide the time for necessary academic courses and the pursuit of vocational and career electives. A somewhat more 'rigorous' daily schedule will pay future dividends to the student, the state and the country. However, if we adhere to the 1993 timetable and make no changes, you will continue to have academic students short-changed and you will see a sharp increase in the high school drop-out rate. . .to the detriment of our society.

"Thank you for considering my input to these hearings."

ICoVE Member: Ronald Morehead, ICoVE Past Chair
Field Representative
Illinois AFL-CIO
Manpower Assistance Program

Format: Letter to committee chair.

"This letter addresses my thoughts on Public Act 85-1322. Let me say first of all, I am most pleased this bill was passed and is being addressed. We have already learned that when the Board of Higher Education college entrance requirements were proposed, even though delayed, they strongly influenced what public schools were telling their students regarding requirements to enter college. Unfortunately, all students who even thought they might go to college, immediately dropped any thought of taking anything but college prep courses, which of course eliminated them from taking any education for employment courses.

"My concerns regarding where we go from here are:

1. *I realize the committee was appointed by three different agencies and it was certainly their prerogative to name who they wanted. However, business and labor were left off. John, I think labor and business need to be involved as the study moves forward.*

2. *The business and labor community is concerned with the competencies people need and must have. They really don't care where they attained them.*

3. *Please consider the people who hire education's product when making decisions about what is important in any course and who should be involved when final decisions are made to the legislature.*

4. *Consider a partnership of business, labor, government, and education when making final decisions and determination of Public Act 85-1322. Although a little off the subject, but certainly related--unless labor and business are included on issues other than only tax increases, education and government may find themselves alone and without support by the people who are critical to passage.*

"Thank you for your consideration."

ICOVE Member: Gerald Schmidt, ICoVE Chair, 1988-89
Manger, Training & Public Affairs
Caterpillar, Inc.

Format: Oral testimony of ICoVE views presented to committee.

"I'm testifying today as chair of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education. My vocation is that of a manager for Caterpillar, Inc. at Aurora, Illinois. My responsibilities include managing Training and Public Affairs. My testimony, today, does not represent an official position of Caterpillar, Inc. on these educational issues.

"It has been said frequently by observers of human performance that the 'best predictor' of 'future success is past success.' That logic is the basis for career pathing--used by counselors in schools and employment agencies. The logic is also used by managers responsible for organizational staffing. But success in any endeavor is based on a series of small successes using a variety of human traits that may include problem analysis, problem solving, communication skills, computation skills, initiative, perception, organizing and planning, etc. The greater the trait variety, the more complex the job is to the performer. For example, the trait variety required by university students to succeed is broader than the trait variety required by the typical 1970's automobile assembly-line worker. The traits I use to manage at Caterpillar have only some transferability to the success requirements of a university dean or those of a U.S. Senator . . . or those of a manager of a chain of retail stores.

"Human performance specialists, however, have been able to agree on a classification of traits that are utilized heavily in many

occupations. An individual's past performance in these trait areas can be used to predict future performance in new environments.

"This morning at Caterpillar, as I've been trained to do, I participated in an assessment summary. This assessment completed our review of a young man's past performance who now wants to be employed as a supervisor. Our job was to assess his past for potential success in a new position in an environment new to him. The assessment required three assessors to come to a consensus about this candidate's past performance on approximately fourteen traits needed to be successful as a supervisor. While I'm not suggesting we use this precise process with students entering universities, I'm suggesting that the principles in the process do apply.

"Comparing the success elements of vocational students to the success elements of college prep students should help determine which vocational students can succeed in university courses. A vocational education student may be as competent in communications, problem-solving, analysis, etc., as the college prep student.

"Your real dilemma as a committee is a general lack of willingness to measure human performance for the purpose of entering universities except with ACT or SAT test scores, class rank, and course completions. My personal opinion of these success indicators is that they are not as valid at predicting success as they have been given credit for--but they may be the best that academicians have been willing to use with the masses they must process.

"Please review current assessment techniques being used in human performance.

"My suggestion to this committee is to review current human performance assessment techniques being used 'outside of academia' to learn of new methods that could be useful in solving the problems you've been assigned. (It seems inappropriate in a public hearing to recommend specific individuals and organizations who could contribute but who would be paid with tax dollars.)

"The process which I've briefly described above will help you understand why selected vocational experiences will prepare students for university entrance requirements. Those experiences I believe will be found in:

1. *Chicago's Agricultural magnet school that prepares students for work, additional training for agriculture-related business, or university entrance.*

2. *The experiences will also be found in the practical or applied mathematics, technology, and communication courses now being taught at several locations throughout the state. More information about these courses should be collected from Dr. Franzie Loepp at Illinois State University.*

3. *Another possible set of experiences that could be reviewed are the experiences of high school co-op students. At the time I completed graduate work, some research indicated that co-op students who later chose to enroll in undergraduate education had a higher completion rate than college prep students but that may have been limited to certain curriculum paths.*

"Your challenge as a committee is to focus on quality of vocational education--not its quantity as measured by course completions. Quality has to be measured in terms of the experiences of learners--i.e., the 'learning traps' that are successfully managed by students. Again, an opinion, that the majority of vocational education processes currently do not prepare the majority of their students for university entrance. But your work can identify standards that can be adopted. My testimony may not prescribe a simple, quick solution to the challenges you have been given. I do ask, however, that you consider assessment processes and principles before reinforcing any system that includes 'course completions' as a major predictor of future success.

"If you must reinforce the use of 'course completions' in your recommendations, please include controls to assure the quality of teaching services and content delivered within the courses.

"Before I close, please consider reviewing the study described by 'WORK PLACE BASICS & THE SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT' being completed now by the U.S. Department of Labor and the American Society of Training and Development. Certainly Illinois employers' need graduates--including college graduates--who have the skills described in this study. In reviewing the skills described, it appears that they are some of--not all of--the skills needed to succeed in the undergraduate education processes.

"Again, I'm pleased you are looking for ways to recognize human talent and its ability to succeed in a variety of challenges. As the Illinois workforce continues to shrink in raw numbers, as it continues to age statistically through the 90's, we must develop new processes that will make Illinois' education more effective in preparing and maintaining the workforce beyond the year 2000."

ICoVE: Peter Johnson, ICoVE Executive Director

Format: Oral testimony of ICoVE views presented to committee.

"The proposal of the IBHE staff to advise universities of college entry requirements rather than establishing and/or mandating minimum entry standards for ten Illinois universities is applauded and supported by the Illinois Council on Vocational Education.

"While the improvement of educational processes, reinforced by recent educational reform legislation, needs to continue with urgency, the previously established standards do not necessarily ensure students, graduates, or employers that additional or improved competence would result. They did not address the learning styles of many students, and the requirements were perceived by many as restricting educational choices. Restrictions that affected the college bound as well as the vast majority of students who, at that age, are not yet committed to a definite career path.

"Labor market projections indicate that the majority of job openings between now and beyond the year 2000 will require education or training beyond the secondary level, but those openings will not require employees with a four-year undergraduate degree.

"This proposal should permit local schools to continue to serve the college bound as well as the silent majority of students who continue their search for a career path. And, this proposal will support school programs that now impart job-entry skills and attitudes . . . programs that are retraining significant numbers of "at risk" youth in our schools.

"ICoVE continues to be concerned with the education processes that prepare and maintain the Illinois workforce. And this proposal will permit continued improvement - improvements that will benefit Illinois and its taxpayers.

ISSUE: Illinois State Board of Education Budget

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Illinois State Board of Education

ICoVE Member: Representative Gordon Ropp, ICoVE Chair 1986–88
State Representative, 88th District
Dairy Farmer

Format: Oral testimony presented at public hearing on the ISBE budget.

"Thank you for holding hearings on the Illinois State Board of Education budget. ICoVE supports your FY 90 budget recommendation for vocational education and will work for its passage.

"ICoVE is pleased to see a request for $50,575,000. This must be considered minimum! It is important that the ISBE make every effort to gain passage of this categorical item if the policy of Education for Employment is to be fully implemented by the 61 Regional

Delivery Systems in Illinois. The lack of funding during the past two years has caused some some school districts to question if the State Board truly supports a vocational delivery system. The passage of your budget request will do much in making the RDS successful and give a strong signal to the school districts of Illinois that the State Board is committed to supporting quality vocational education programs in Illinois. The cuts in vocational education in fiscal years 88 and 89 have had a negative effect on the RDS and have caused many school districts to label it as another requirement which will go away. The cuts have also put federal funding for vocational education in jeopardy which could be a loss of approximately 39 million dollars. Please note the attached letter.

"We applaud the request for $1,750,000 for vocational staff development. Over 2000 vocational teachers, counselors, and administrators have profited from this investment in the past two years. We would like to see the ISBE expand this type of program to teachers of other disciplines such as math, English, science and social studies. It would be of great benefit to have all teachers aware of what is going on in the transition from school to employment and return to the classroom with the ability to relate their subject matter to today's world of work. Many students can be stimulated and motivated if they see a relationship between subject matter and application.

"Although it is too early to tell the impact of the one million dollars assistance given to agriculture education, we encourage you to support this program and expand it to health, industrial, business, and home economics programs. Special assistance to each of these occupational areas would prove to be a catalyst to flagship programs in the state which ultimately will assist all districts in improving the quality of their vocational programs.

"At a time when Illinois business is competing in a high-technology world, ICoVE is concerned that the ISBE has not requested monetary support in technology programs for all Illinois students. These programs were funded as pilot projects for a number of years by ISBE and were beginning to stimulate other districts to adopt similar courses. The technology programs addressed the practical application of physics, math, and computers and did much to make the State Board of Education learning outcomes attainable and relevant in the eyes of many students. ICoVE supports the ISBE's commitment to basic skills for all students. Education for Technology will do much to assist many at-risk students to attain technological skills. Therefore, ICoVE strongly supports that, at the very minimum, the $75,000 which was committed for Education for Technology in FY 87 should again be placed in the ISBE budget.

"ICoVE is supportive of the funding for High Impact Training Programs (HITS). These programs have assisted many employers, as

well as their employees to upgrade their skills, and has proven to be profitable to the state and its economy. In addition the state has had an excellent return on its investment. This program has increased employment which obviously improves its tax base.

"ICoVE is encouraged by ISBE's request of $16.5 million for truancy, dropouts, and optional education programs. At a time when many of our students are complacent and reluctant learners, over 25 percent of them physically drop out of our programs and who knows how many have turned meaningful learning off long before leaving. It is imperative that alternative programs be started and maintained which address the learning styles of the students. In past years, ICoVE feels that these programs have not used vocational education as effectively as they could. We request that this be looked at and vocational courses be used to meet the needs of these at-risk students.

"In reviewing other parts of the State Superintendent's budget for FY 90, it is apparent to ICoVE that now is the time to start integrating academics, special education, vocational education, and other special programs such as those in rehabilitation, etc. It is noted that budgets have to be listed categorically and "administered separately due to sources of funding; however, we feel that there is a definite overlap of programs within the State Board. We recommend that the State Board address this concern and begin mainstreaming vocational education into the total educational program. For example, we feel that the combining of funds for programs as remedial reading, truancy, dropouts, and other special courses would be used effectively for many more students. We feel that by cooperatively integrating programs, issues such as the following could be addressed:

1. *How can college prep courses address the needs of students going directly into the world of work, as well as preparing for college?*
2. *How can vocational education courses provide basic skills, i.e. computation, reading directions, writing reports?*
3. *How can the English, science, or math curriculum describe applications in the world of work?*
4. *How can disadvantaged students be better served?*

"We feel that the State Board should begin movement and provide incentives on innovative programs which will address the mainstreaming and coordination of high school curriculum which will serve all students regardless of their next goal in life.

"In summary, as we stated in ICoVE's review of the Plan for Implementing Education for Employment in Illinois, we commend the Illinois State Board of Education for requesting a substantial increase in funding for vocational education. We trust that as conference time comes for final negotiations with the legislature,

funding for vocational education will have a high priority and not become a 'bargaining chip' to keep other programs.

"Thank you very much for allowing me to testify today."

ISSUE: Corrections Education

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Governor James Thompson

ICoVE Member: Jesse Rios, ICoVE Member 1982–1988
President
National Council American Federation of Government Employees

Format: Letter to Governor James Thompson.

"The Illinois Council on Vocational Education (ICoVE) is deeply concerned with issues that relate to the adult and juvenile offenders of the State of Illinois. In this regard, the Council has a standing subcommittee that acts as the State Vocational Advisory Committee to the Department of Corrections School District #428.

"This Corrections Subcommittee is working with the Corrections School District Community Services Division and the Department of Employment Security to develop instructional programs and job placement services for the offenders upon their release. This subcommittee believes that education training and job placement programs will have a positive impact on reducing the incidents of crime and will reduce the problems of prison crowding.

"The Corrections Subcommittee again is also deeply concerned over the recent staff reduction in the Department of Corrections Community Services Division. We believe that the loss of services provided by these employees will result in the continuation of the problems associated with the criminal offenders in our state.

"We strongly recommend that you re-evaluate the importance of the services provided to the offender who is released to the community, and consider identifying the resources necessary to reinstate these employees who provide such essential services.

ISSUE: Private Sector Internships for Vocational Educators (VIP program)

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Representative Gordon Ropp, Illinois General Assembly

ICoVE Member: James Denny, VIP Committee Chair
Director, Organization/Human Resource Development
International Minerals and Chemical Corporation

Format: Letter written to Rep. Gordon Ropp to convey ICoVE position.

"As reviewed at the November 10 ICoVE meeting, the following change recommendations to the rules and regulations governing the V.I.P. Program are submitted for early 1987 legislative consideration:

1. *The V.I.P Rules and Regulations be made tougher re: selection of participants and allocation of grant funds by an Educational Service Center (E.S.C.). This year there were 2 ESCs that allocated funds to everyone that applied. This diluted the available funds and allowed a maximum internship of only one week for each applicant.*

2. *Make 'accountability back in the classroom' mandatory for college credit associated with the Practicum.*

3. *An amendment that would allow a V.I.P. participant to work for another government agency or non-private employer 'not in the same environment' (e.g. Great Lakes Service School Command, V.A. hospitals, etc.).*

4. *An amendment that would allow corrections vocational instructors to participate:*

   a. *by using the maximum $250 per week grant monies to hire substitutes. Corrections instructors are on a 12-month schedule and it would not be fair to expect them to use vacation time to participate.*

   b. *during months other than the currently restricted June-August period.*

5. *That private-sector employers, where they assume up to 30% of the grant for value added performance, be allowed to reimburse the State, rather than pay directly to the intern. This has caused payroll problems with some employers.*

6. *The administrative cost for liability and workmen's compensation insurance be paid from the dollars appropriated for the V.I.P. Program. Amendment wording should be drafted by ISBE attorneys."*

ICoVE Member: Representative Gordon Ropp, ICoVE Chair 1986-88
State Representative, 88th District

Format: Letter written to Governor Thompson to convey ICoVE position.

"I am writing to you not only as a Legislator, but also as the Chair of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education. I would like to call your attention to H.B. 3090, page 21, line 28, and your veto of $1,500,000 for grants to teachers who participate in vocational education retraining.

"One of the prime national issues is the preparation of qualified teachers--training and retraining. Illinois could again be the vanguard in this endeavor by supporting the Vocational Instruction Practicum program through a supplemental appropriation.

"Approximately 1100 vocational education teachers from Illinois' high schools and community colleges have participated in the program this year ($1.5 million allocated). Teachers received stipends for their participation and were granted the opportunity to keep up with new techniques and technologies, learning through internship with businesses in their field. Support of this legislation allows teachers to interact with business and industry and then bring the new methods back to the classroom.

"It is my personal opinion that guidance counselors and administrators should be included in this program as they have initial contact with the students and their skills also need updating to stay current with the vast new technologies.

"The feedback we have received from the teachers has been very positive with over 80 percent rating the experience as 'excellent.' The bottom line is whether or not this staff development is worthwhile and has an impact in the classroom. An overwhelming percentage (98%) of the teachers that participated stated this VIP experience will have an impact on how they teach their classes.

"Businesses that have participated in this program have stated it was a mutually beneficial experience that has opened needed communications so business and schools may work together more effectively. Business has offered many suggestions concerning where specific emphasis on certain topics should be stresed for the merging technologies. Nearly 100 percent of the businesses contacted stated they would be willing to again participate.

"In light of the above, I urge you to reconsider this matter and support a supplemental appropriation for this important aid to education. This needs to be done this fall in order to give 1987 participants an opportunity to make plans.

Thank you for again considering this timely vocational education matter.

ISSUE: Federal Support for Vocational Education

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: President of the United States, United States Senators and United States Members of Congress

ICoVE Member: Representative Gordon Ropp, ICoVE Chair 1986–88
State Representative, 88th District
Dairy Farmer

Format: Letter to President Reagan, copies to Sen. Dixon, Sen. Simon and Rep. Robert H. Michel

"The Illinois Council on Vocational Education is very disappointed to see that all federal funding for vocational education will be eliminated if Congress approves your budget recommendations for FY 88. We hope that you will reconsider this decision and restore at least the almost $900 million funding provided to the 16 million citizens who have the opportunity to become productive, contributing members of society because the federal government demonstrated their support and leadership for vocational education.

"Federal support through the years has been the catalyst to make vocational education an effective way to provide assistance to the states and most definitely assist them in determining the direction they should take in their planning. The Carl Perkins Act, which you signed into law in 1984, supports vocational education as a basic component of our nation's economic development, and if eliminated I feel that this could be a signal for states to do the same which will undoubtedly have a decided impact on our nation's ability to have a skilled workforce.

"Our council has had numerous hearings in the State of Illinois to ascertain how citizens, employers and students feel about vocational education. Let me assure you that they see education and specifically vocational education as a vehicle to provide a solution to national issues such as curbing unemployment, reducing the dropout rate and serving displaced workers, the handicapped, and disadvantaged and other disenfranchised populations with special needs.

"As a state legislator as well as the chair of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education and National Association of State Councils on Vocational Education, I urge you to take another look at the impact of what your proposed budget for vocational education will do to our nation. In these most competitive times with the world, it's imperative that we come together as a 'national team' which can keep our nation number one. Our future depends on our human resources and vocational education is an integral part of the strength of our nation.

ICoVE Member: Ronald Morehead, ICoVE Past Chair
Field Representative
Illinois AFL-CIO
Manpower Assistance Program

Format: Letters to Senator Alan Dixon, Senator Paul Simon, and Representative Edward Madigan.

"I was disturbed recently to learn that the Department of Education has targeted vocational education for all of its required Gramm-Rudman cuts, in its proposed budget.

"Vocational education serves a very necessary role and purpose in preparing young people to develop the necessary skills to compete in today's marketplace. It especially benefits those young people who will not be pursuing a college degree, but do need a background of basic skills to find decent jobs.

"Last year Congress passed the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act that brought sweeping changes to the field and promised new innovative programs for students. Now, one year later, cutting those same programs makes little sense.

"I hope that you will examine how cuts are being made, and what sectors of the population are bearing an unfair burden."

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education recommends that the Illinois State Board of Education pursue the following initiatives related to policy issues which impact vocational education in Illinois.

- Continue dialogue with educational leaders and decision-makers regarding solutions to the 11 issues addressed in this report.

- Address the three major concerns for policy identified in 1985–1987 council report, ***EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT . . . INVESTING IN PEOPLE.*** ICoVE believes resolution to the 11 issues of current concern may be inherent in these policy matters. The three concerns for policy include:

  - ***The Governor of Illinois must reaffirm his commitment to establishing a plan for preparing and maintaining Illinois' workforce to meet job market needs. Agencies should be assigned responsibilities and directed to work together to accomplish the task. The State of Illinois needs an overall plan to provide direction to and coordination of public and private sectors which have responsibility for developing and maintaining an effective workforce.***

  - ***The Illinois State Board of Education must adopt policy to reinforce and clarify education's role in economic development. Education has a responsibility for Illinois' economic development. This responsibility needs to be more clearly defined and assigned. Without education's contribution, Illinois' workforce will lack effectiveness.***

  - ***The Illinois State Board of Education must review the implications of its designated responsibility for vocational education. The authority of the State Board to set policy and administer vocational education should be understood, acted upon, and implemented by the educational community, the job training community, the private sector, other public sector entities, and the Board itself.***

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education suggests the following actions in searching for positive solutions to the 11 issues identified in this report.

- Pilot internships for teachers in non-vocational subject areas and elementary programs.

- Assess achievement of students receiving instruction in applied academic subjects.
- Follow up results to determine the success of programs using curriculum which integrates academic and vocational education.
- Study the feasibility of program designs using a one-track educational approach which offers emphasis and options for students wishing to prepare for entering employment and continuing their education.
- Use follow-up studies to determine education's ability to teach students about work.
- Provide information to parents, as well as students, about graduation and university entrance requirements.
- Identify a variety of scheduling models which expand student options.
- Encourage local leadership to expand partnerships with the private sector for the purpose of seeking new ways to expand option.
- Identify support systems essential for students to benefit from vocational education.
- Capitalize on the significance of vocational education in the total educational process to strengthen its image to the public.
- Apprise the public of workplace changes which affect educational needs.

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